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A New Race of the Philippine Creeper, *Rhabdornis inornatus* (Class Ayes)

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The species *Rhabdornis inornatus* was described from Samar by Grant in 1896. In 1907 McGregor recorded the species from Mindanao. His specimen was the first known female and he described certain differences between his Mindanao specimen and Samar birds. In 1946 the Philippine Zoological Expedition of the Chicago Natural History Museum collected three males on Mindanao and on comparison with Samar material they proved to represent an undescribed race which I named *R. i. alaris* in 1948. Dr. D. S. Rabor, of the Silliman University in Negros, collecting for the Chicago Natural History Museum in Negros Island in 1948 and 1949 secured three specimens on that island which are the first record of the species for Negros, and which prove to represent another undescribed race. Thus the species at present is divisible into three well marked races.

(1) *Rhabdornis inornatus alaris* Rand

Rhabdornis inornatus alaris Rand, 1948, Fieldiana, Zoology, vol. 31, p. 204. Type locality, East Slope of Mt. McKinley at 3000 feet, Davao Province, Mindanao.

Diagnosis. The most conspicuous characters distinguishing this race from the other two are (a) the reduction of white marking in upper wing covert (where it is almost completely lacking) and in the side of the neck and head, (b) the heavier striping of the underparts, (c) the darker, more ochraceous lining to the wing, and (d) the browner crown.

Measurements.

	wing	tail	culmen	tarsus
male	88, 89, 90	51, 53, 53	18, 18.5, 19	20, 21, 21
female	85, 92	46, 47	18, 18	20, 21 mm.

Range. Known only from Mindanao.

Remarks. The females are very similar to the males in color.

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(2) *Rhabdornis inornatus inornatus* Ogilvie Grant

Rhabdornis inornatus Ogilvie Grant, 1896, Bull. Brit. Orn. Club, vol. 6, p. 18. Type locality, Samar.

Diagnosis. Differs from *R. i. alaris* in having conspicuous white stripes in the upper wing coverts; in the larger and more plentiful white markings in the sides of the neck; in the more white in the stripe over and behind the eye; in the less heavy and less extensive streaking of the underparts; in the paler ochraceous inner edgings of the flight feathers and under wing coverts; and in the slightly greyer, less brownish top of the head.

Measurements.

	<i>wing</i>	<i>tail</i>	<i>culmen</i>	<i>tarsus</i>
<i>male</i>	79, 85	41, 48	18, 19	19, 21 mm.

Range. Known only from Samar.

(3) *Rhabdornis inornatus rabori* new subsp.

Type. Chicago Natural History Museum No. 191334, from Lake Balinsasayao, Negros Island. Adult male, collected May 28, 1949 by D. S. Rabor.

Diagnosis. Most like *R. i. inornatus* but differing in the lores, and area from gape to under the eye and the auricular patch being dark grey (instead of brownish black); in the crown and hind neck being considerably greyer and this color extending farther onto the fore back; in presence of black blotches on the corners of the feathers of the posterior part of the hind neck (these are lacking in the other two forms); in the greyer (less whitish) throat and in the slightly larger size as shown by wing, tail, culmen and tarsus measurements. Additional differences in the present series which may also prove diagnostic are the greater width of the white stripes of the upper wing coverts, and the very slightly more conspicuous light shaft streaks of the mantle.

Measurements. (The type is the first measurement in each case.)

	<i>wing</i>	<i>tail</i>	<i>culmen</i>	<i>tarsus</i>
<i>male</i>	94, 92, 93	60, 61, 61	20, 20, 21	22, 21.5, 22 mm.

Range. Known only from Negros Island.

Remarks. *Rhabdornis* is a genus of tree creepers, endemic to the Philippines, with but two species: *R. mystacalis* and *R. inornatus*. Presumably these represent an old element of the Philippine avifauna, and it is perhaps surprising that more races (*R. mystacalis* has two races: *mystacalis* on Luzon, Masbate, Negros and Panay; *minor* on Basilan, Mindanao, Bobol, Leyte, and Samar) have not evolved as has happened with some other species.

The three subspecies described in *R. inornatus* do not represent steps in a graded series, but each has different characters that set it off sharply.

R. inornatus, that lives in the southern part of the Archipelago only, has a short bill like *R. m. minor* with which it coexists on Mindanao, but on Negros the short-billed *inornatus* apparently occurs along with the long-billed *R. m. mystacalis*

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